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## **New Program Offers Solar For Milwaukee, By Milwaukee**

Milwaukee, WI - A new solar purchase program is hoping to increase clean energy production in Milwaukee while supporting local jobs and a growing local industry. The City of Milwaukee's solar program, Milwaukee Shines, is teaming up with the Midwest Renewable Energy Association to launch a pilot solar purchase program called the *Milwaukee Power Pack*.

The *Milwaukee Power Pack* program, the first of its kind in the United States, will market solar in a new way. The program supports local manufacturers, builds a customer base for local installers, and makes solar more affordable for customers. The *Milwaukee Power Pack* solar system will include solar panels from Milwaukee's own Helios Solar Works and an inverter from Ingeteam, who opened its manufacturing facility in Milwaukee last year.

"This innovative partnership demonstrates my continued commitment to creating quality jobs while building an environmentally healthy community," said Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett. "The program offers quality solar products from Milwaukee companies, installed by local professionals, at a lower cost for our residents: this is one example of how my vision for a sustainable Milwaukee becomes a reality," said Barrett.

This pilot program will launch on May 1 and run through July 31, 2012.

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The Milwaukee Power Pack is a project of the  
Midwest Renewable Energy Association in partnership with Milwaukee Shines  
[www.midwestrenew.org](http://www.midwestrenew.org) [www.MilwaukeeShines.com](http://www.MilwaukeeShines.com)





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“It is our hope that by coupling local products with education, marketing, and a trained local workforce, customers will be able to take advantage of record low costs of solar electric installations in the Milwaukee area,” said Amy Heart, Solar Program Manager for the City of Milwaukee. The program is designed to build on the Milwaukee Shines Solar Financing program which offers low-interest loans to help finance the remaining cost of a solar installation.

Since being named a Solar America City by the U.S. Department of Energy in 2008, the City of Milwaukee’s solar program, a project of the Office of Environmental Sustainability, has supported the growth of a strong solar industry, which has seen an increase in manufacturers, an increase in trained and certified installers, and an increase in the number of solar installations on home and businesses. “The Milwaukee Power Pack is designed to build on these successes by connecting our local strengths to reduce the cost of solar,” said Heart.

The *Milwaukee Power Pack* program provides a way to build the local solar industry and local solar workforce while providing a lower cost to customers. The program will feature competitive pricing of the local solar components, but costs are also being reduced simply by the lack of shipping or distribution costs. “Local installers can simply pick up the solar panels and inverters on their way to a job site, and have no storage or shipping charges,” said Heart. “We have the opportunity to use the benefits of a local, response solar industry to lower the bottom line for home and business owners in the Milwaukee area”

The Midwest Renewable Energy Association (MREA) will provide education and outreach as part of the Milwaukee Power Pack partnership. The MREA will host weekly *Solar Power Hours* to help home and business owners learn the basics of solar energy, available incentives, and questions to ask installers.

Nick Korth, Milwaukee Manager for the MREA said the goal is to clean up misconceptions about solar, and to educate consumers about how solar is reliable, affordable and here to stay. “Home and business owners can get that reassurance through the *Milwaukee Power Pack*, which provides quality local products, superior workmanship, and the sense of community with other solar owners,” said Korth.

Interested home or business owners are invited to attend upcoming educational sessions, *Solar Power Hours*, which will be held throughout the community. Some of the Solar Power Hours will be held at Helios Solar Works, so potential customers can see how the solar panels are made in Milwaukee.

Details on the program can be found online at [www.MilwaukeeShines.com](http://www.MilwaukeeShines.com) or by calling 414-431-0758.

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